United Nations

Press Release

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General appoints heads of Special Commission to monitor and verify Iraq's destruction or rendering harmless of its weapons systems.

- Secretary-General holds talks with French officials and his envoys to Gulf region; receives honorary law degree from Bordeaux University.

- Chief Military Observer of United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission informs Iraqi Government officials in Baghdad of UNIKOM deployment plan.

- Secretary-General calls on Security Council to authorize establishment of United Nations mission to monitor referendum for self-determination of peoples of Western Sahara.

- Co-Chairmen of Paris Conference and Secretary-General appeal for voluntary cease-fire in Cambodia.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar today, through his spokeswoman, announced the appointment of Ambassador Rolf Ekeus as Executive Chairman, and Robert L. Gallucci as Deputy Executive Chairman, of the Special Commission to carry out the tasks called for in Security Council resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April. The resolution -- setting the terms for cease-fire -- calls, among other things, for the removal of all of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

In a report to the Council, dated 19 April, the Secretary-General recommended that a Special Commission be established as soon as possible to begin on-site inspections. He proposed that it be composed of 20 to 25 persons, representing five groups: biological and chemical weapons; ballistic missiles; nuclear-weapons capabilities; future compliance; and operations support. The operations support would be assisted by a few hundred technical experts serving as inspectors, disposal teams and field support

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officers. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would monitor the removal of nuclear-weapons-usable material from Iraq, the Secretary-General said.

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The Secretary-General was in Bordeaux today where this evening he received an honorary degree in law from Bordeaux University.

Before leaving Paris last Friday, the Secretary-General had a meeting with French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas. They discussed the Persian Gulf in view of recent developments.

On Saturday, the Secretary-General received Sadruddin Aga Khan, his Executive Delegate, who came to Paris from Iraq to brief the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and to report to the Secretary-General on the situation in Iraq. The Secretary-General also received Eric Suy, his Personal Envoy to Iraq, who also reported to him on his mission.

The Secretary-General then presided over a meeting attended by Sadruddin Aga Khan and Sadako Ogata, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who came to Paris to confer with the Secretary-General.

The same group, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary-General, also had a meeting with the United States Ambassador to Geneva, Morris B. Abram, to discuss the present situation at the borders of Iraq and Turkey.

The Secretary-General will return to Paris tomorrow on his way to New York.

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A United Nations official today announced that Chief Military Observer Major-General Gunther Greindl had travelled to Baghdad during the weekend to meet with Iraqi Government officials to inform them of the plan for the deployment to the demilitarized zone of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM).

The total strength of UNIKOM as of today was 76, including 67 in Kuwait, six in Baghdad and three in Riyadh, the official said. Major-General Greindl had designated a commander for each of three sectors within the demilitarized zone -- north, central and south. All main routes used to supply UNIKOM had been cleared of mines, and work continued on routes to be used for patrolling.

The official said all military observers were expected to be in place and all observation posts to open on schedule by next week.

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The Secretary-General has called on the Security Council to authorize the establishment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western

Sahara (MINURSO), envisaged to monitor the holding of "free, fair and impartial" elections in the Territory.

In a report to the Council, dated 19 April, the Secretary-General said he would appoint a Special Representative to head and direct MINURSO, and who would report to him and make recommendations on the Mission.

The Secretary-General stressed that certain essential conditions must be met before the referendum could be held, such as the Council's full support and backing to MINURSO. He also stressed the necessity of the full cooperation of the two parties, meaning the cessation of all hostile acts, and the availability of necessary financial resources from United Nations member countries.

The Secretary-General went on to say that the repatriation part of MINURSO's operation should be managed by UNHCR. The cost of repatriation had been estimated at some $34 million, which would be funded through voluntary contributions. The total cost of MINURSO was estimated at approximately $200 million, to be considered as expenses of the United Nations to be borne by Member countries' assessed contributions to the Organization, the Secretary-General said.

In August 1988, the two parties in the dispute -- the Moroccan Government and the Frente Popular para la Liberacion de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rio de Oro (POLISARIO) -- agreed, in principle, to the Secretary-General's proposal to hold a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

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The Co-Chairmen of the Paris Conference on Cambodia and the Secretary-General today issued a statement in which they expressed concern about recent reports of intensified fighting in Cambodia.

They recalled that the Security Council and the General Assembly had unanimously urged all parties to the conflict to exercise maximum self-restraint, so as to create a climate conducive to the achievement of a comprehensive political settlement.

The two Co-Chairmen, the Foreign Ministers of France and Indonesia, said they hoped to convene a meeting with the members of the Supreme National Council in Jakarta before the end of spring, in order to pursue the discussions on the draft agreements of last November and explore ways to resolve the pending issues. They appealed to all parties to the conflict to observe a temporary cessation of hostilities, from the first of May at least until the conclusion of the Jakarta meeting.

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